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Next 16 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 1999/08/24 : CIA-RDP78-02771R000300340001-8

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Several items from recent Thai publications give the following versions of the situation created by establishment of the new state in Yunnan.

From the Weekly Press Summary of the Thai Press 22-28 February 1953:

"A New Thai State," editorial

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February 26

Sayamrat Weekly (Neutral)

From the New China News Agency comes the news that a Thai Autonomous State has been created in Yunnan, Southern China. There are forty-seven nationalities in this new state, but the largest national group is the Thais, who number about two hundred thousand. For this reason the new state is called a Thai state to conform with the racial name of the majority of the population. The Capital City of the new state is the town of Cheli, and the first prime minister of this state is a person name that is Thai as Plack Phibunsongkram.

The main policy of the government of this state is to get rid of American and Chinese Nationalist influences within the state's own territories. The policy is both natural and logical, since the policy of a newly created red government must naturally be identical with that of its red creator, and an "autonomous" state which is only a small part of the Communist Empire cannot but reflect the will of the dictator party. The creation of a new state is in fact mere routine work behind the iron or bamboo curtain. It can have no significance other than propaganda.

To give significance to Mao's new plaything is tantamount to giving importance where importance is not due. The word Thai is after all a racial name, and the Thai people in Yunnan or elsewhere have as much right to it as we have. Our racial pride should make us glad that a new Thai state has come into being, if only we could

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force ourselves to give credence to the word "autonomous" which is laconically attached to the state name. For us to be otherwise agitated by the birth of this new state is to admit our own defeat by the communist propaganda weapon. As China is a country that comprises many racial groups, scattered over her vast regions, we may expect in the future many more formation of new states under different racial names. The time for us to be really excited would be when Red China creates a new autonomous state called America.

It is at a time like this that we look back upon the name "Siam" with a sense of nostalgia. For this is indeed a name that the communists cannot tamper with. The change, however, has already been made, and the name of Thailand has at last endeared itself to us through the process of constant contact and acquired taste. We sincerely hope that the government of Thailand will not follow the precedent of changing the name of the "Peace Villa," to avoid the repugnant Communist Peace Movement, and change the name of the country back again to Siam. For that would indeed be another mark added to the communist score board in this deep-freeze war between opposite ideologies.

"Column for Reflection," by "Thoert Tham"

February 28

Khao Phap Rai Wan

(police controlled)

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We should be interested in the news reports of the establishment of the "Free Thai State" in Yunnan, China. We should study this move carefully. The establishment of the Free Thai State has features along the lines of the Soviet administration. China today has an administrative regime along the same lines as the Soviet pattern and is one of the patterns of the federation states. The administrative regime of many countries, such as the United States and Switzerland, is like the pattern of the federated states, but the Soviet Federation differs from the federation of the United States and Switzerland. Besides "federal republics," there are also "autonomous republics."

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"autonomous regions" and "national territories." All these autonomous republics, regions and territories are represented in the Soviet Government in the same way that federal governments are represented in the national or central government.

Hence, the establishment of this Free Thai State may mean the establishment of the "Autonomous Republic of the Thai Nationality" in Yunnan. The administration of this autonomous Thai republic must be under the control of the federal republic as well as the republic of the Chinese people.

In "Today's Column" -- "White Thai, Red Thai," by "X-ray"

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February 28

Kiattisak (nationalist)

On the establishment of the Free Thai State and the formation of the Government of Chao Khun Sin, who is Prime Minister, Field Marshal Phibun Songkram forecasted that political refugees from Thailand may join the administration of this country. The Field Marshal's forecast would be the same as the general forecast. This is very important for us to predict that when political refugees from Thailand cooperate with the Free Thai Government, the policy of the Free Thai Government can be antagonistic also to the Government of Thailand, especially when this state and this government are established and supported by Mao Tze Tung. The Field Marshal stated that he has referred this matter to the National Defense Council for study and that steps must be taken to prepare for the aggression of the Free Thai.

The Field Marshal further stated that this move affects Thailand because our Constitution provides for only one country. This causes the Field Marshal much anxiety over whether future political developments would take the path of North Indochina and South Indochina; North Burma and South Burma; North India and South India or not depend on the role of the Government of Chao Khun Sin.

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One thing which cannot be avoided is that the world may, instead of calling us simply "Thai," may call us "White Thai" and "Red Thai" as China is called "Red China" and "White China" or in the case of Korea, the Red and White Koreans. (Summary)

"The Free Thai Government," editorial

February 28

Nangsu Phim Chao

(police controlled)

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There are news reports that a Free Thai Government has been established in Sipsong Chuthai or in the province which is under the sovereignty of China and under the support of Communist China. It can be considered the comedy of the Communists because the country which has sovereignty (Red China) over the minority group has established this minority group into an independent country to create political unrest in foreign countries. This move cannot but be called an aggressive measure because it is not known that the minority group (Free Thai) has resorted to arms to drive the Chinese away in order to establish itself as an independent state. If the Constitution of Red China provides for the minority group to be an independent state, then the free state ought to thank Red China and this measure would have no bearing on Thailand.

Geographically the establishment of this Free Thai State may be a disadvantage to Thailand because the boundaries are not adjoining one another. But if the Free Thai State installed by the Reds want to join Thailand, then prior consent must be sought through the National Assembly according to the Constitution. According to the present Constitution Thailand is one and indivisible. The present Thailand which is recognized by international law is a genuine Thailand. No one (by whatever means) can separate the administration of Thailand into two or three states; and no country can divide Thailand into two or three states. If such a step is taken, whether by an individual or country, it means that the person or country responsible must be definitely suppressed.

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Suppose the mentioned fake Thai state turns a communist satellite and is given arms support by the communists to aggress against the Kingdom of Thailand, then a foreign army is aggressing against the sovereignty of Thailand, and every Thai citizen should fight to suppress this attack.

It is more of a joke if it is referred to as a government without a country, because persons who organized this fake government were not driven from Thailand when they legally assumed power, but were driven out because they were defeated by the force of a coup d'etat. The condition of this government is not the same as the governments without a country during World War II established in England because their countries were at war with the enemy and they had to retreat. Hence, the Free State in Red China has no meaning to Thailand. (Condensed)

From the Weekly Press Summary of the Thai Press 1-7 March 1953:

"Another Thailand for Choice," by Kukrit Pramote

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March 2

Sayamrat (neutral)

There is a rather exciting piece of news at the moment, and because of it, if you should ask a strange question: Are there two Thailands? - the correct answer you would get is "Right."

For there is this Thailand that we know as our country and there is the Thai Autonomous State just created in Yunnan by the Chinese Government at Peking. Exciting, isn't it? But let's not jump to conclusions and interpret the occurrence as something to our disadvantage. From the available information concerning this new Thai land, I gather that it is not unlike the situation in Chiengrai where, according to a book written by an MP, the Thai live among scores of other peoples. The same goes for China, but among those "other peoples" in China, it seems the Thai, evidently descendants of those who did not join our own forbears in their flight from Chu Kad Ling, are the largest group.

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To set up a new state, calling it "autonomous" while granting it no real freedom, is a most common form of government practiced by the Soviet Union. The Peking government, for all we know, is trying their best to sovietize their country according to the Russian pattern. There are many "autonomous" states in Russia, named after the peoples who live there, theoretically free to choose their own ways of life, but actually are under complete control of the Kremlin or of Stalin himself. That Mao Tse Tung has established a new state within China can hardly be called a surprising move.

Actually, the Thai State is the second one to emerge behind the Bamboo Curtain, the first being Tibet. Mao Tse Tung's reason for naming the state after us probably lies in his desire to please the Thai people in south China, rather than to plan an aggression against this "State of Strange Autonomy" which is our home. The Thai people, in whichever country they happen to find themselves, usually have a way of holding on to the name Thai as something greater than any doctrine. China has been trying for many centuries to transform the Thai people into good Chinamen, sometimes by persuasion, but the stubborn Thai have managed to remain themselves and even continue to speak the language, which can be easily understood by their brothers in this peninsula. To this day, they still call the Chinese their "guest" who has come for a visit only to stay for good; they never regard the Chinese as the owner of the land. Continental China is not the only place where the Thai people may be found. On the Island of Hainan, homes belonging to the Thai occupy the middle part of the island, while the Hainan Chinese live near the shore. We Thai in This Thailand are always impressed by the fact that the Hainan Chinese can say "dee" and not turning (it) into "lee" like other Chinese, and like to think that the Thai in Hainan has had something to do with this linguistic achievement, however minor it is.

Take for another example the case of the Thai people living in Indochina. There is a region to the north of Hanoi, a real "Muang Thai" it is, for the lot of Thai people living there have made it so. Now, take Ho Chi Minh, no matter what you say, the fact remains that he has won the respect

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of a large number of the Annamites. But one of the peoples in Indochina who refuse to cooperate with him is the Thai. In fact, they are quite actively helping the French fight him and his Viet-Minh troops. This does not mean they like being a French colony, but they do it because they do not wish to be ruled by the Annamites. The Peking government in Yunnan may have occasion to find this Thai trait a serious stumbling block to their plans. An average Thai anywhere will believe it when told he is "free" or "democratic," but try to tell him he is a "communist" and you'll run into trouble. He'll deny it with all his might, even taking pains to have his denial recorded and broadcast.

The premier of this new free Thai State is Chao Khun Sin, a true Thai name, as true as any around here which have not been influenced by India. But let me hasten to warn the readers not to let this name mislead them into thinking that someone here in our midst has made good his escape and joined the communists in establishing the new government. Such a belief would be entirely unfounded and would unnecessarily cause hard feelings among several quarters. It is very logical that there should be leaders with Thai names in a Thai community. Such names as Chao Khun Sin, Chao Khun Keo, Chao Wanna and a host of others are quite common not only in north Thailand, and north Burma, but also in China itself. And if the premier's name is Chao Khun Sin, we could guess what the names of the cabinet members would sound like. The Minister of Finance, for instance, might be someone named Chao Kampan, the Minister of Education, Tao San Pom, the Minister of Economic Affairs, Nan Bunkerd, and so forth. Such names as Boripan, Phromyothi, or Worakan Bancha, probably would not appear at all, being definitely Indian in origin and used widely only by the Thai in this country. Should Chao Khun Sin himself ever come to take up residence here, he might after a certain period change his name to "Thanarat" or something along the same line. But I don't think we have to worry about that at the moment, or to fear that some Thai from here has gone there to help in the making of the new state.

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Come to think of it, you cannot help feeling comfortable over the idea of having another state for the Thai people. For there are some around here who subscribe to the communist doctrine, some who do not like America, some who do not like the present government, and even some who do not like the Prime Minister Field Marshal Phibun Songkram. Now these people should feel a sense of relief, and exhilaration too, that there is a new Thailand more "progressive" than the old, to which they could go if they choose. There, one could freely become a communist and nothing else. There the government has announced its determination to get rid of every American influence. There one finds an entirely new government headed by Chao Khun Sin and not Field Marshal Plaek. As for those not quite so "progressive," or those who like their steps forward and backward in the manner of doing a samba, or still those who do not dislike anyone and are loyal fans of the Field Marshal's like this writer, they will very likely choose to remain here and consider themselves lucky not to have to dodge bullets whose source and destination would be unknown to them.

And as a Thai people, we should also be glad to know that China has thought it necessary to create a state for the Thai within its own boundaries. Such an action is a testimony to the hardness of the Thai race, an assurance that no one may swallow with ease. We should (offer) our congratulations and our best wishes to those Thai in that other land, and be proud of them too, for although "autonomy" and "freedom" are now but words for them; who can tell whether one day they might not become truly autonomous and free. When that day comes, let us be ready to welcome them with both arms, for they will be Thai as we are Thai. Political doctrines may be changed - democracy today, communism tomorrow, and vice versa, but to be Thai is to remain Thai, as the forefathers of Chao Khun Sin and Field Marshal Plaek have been for six thousand years, and as their children will be for all the years to come. It can't be changed easily like a coat or a doctrine.

With this thought in mind, I wish there would be more of these Thai Autonomous States - in Hainan, Indochina, north Burma, Assam and wherever there are Thai

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people living and working with the Thai spirit. Then perhaps peace will come to this part of the world, for Thai would not fight Thai, and perhaps in this Thailand, too, there will be less struggling and killing for the sake of power, for then the quota of premiership and other high positions will be so enlarged as to satisfy more yearning souls.

The articles demonstrate that the idea of a Greater Thailand is not completely dead. Though this idea may exist at the present time in the minds of some Thais, it seems unlikely that they will do anything about it unless world conditions change sufficiently to warrant another attempt. Even then, some outside stimulus, such as the Japanese provided in 1940, would probably be necessary.

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